

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Applicants: KATO, et al.  
Filed: January 23, 2001  
For: VACUUM PROCESSING APPARATUS AND OPERATING  
METHOD THEREFOR

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

January 23, 2001

Sir:

Please amend the above-identified application, prior to examination thereof, as follows:

**IN THE SPECIFICATION**

Please amend the specification as follows:

Page 1, delete lines 1-8 in their entirety, and substitute therefor the following:

--This application is a Divisional application of application Serial No. 09/461,432, filed December 16, 1999, which is a Continuation application of application Serial No. 09/177,495, filed October 23, 1998, which is a Continuation application of application Serial No. 09/061,062, filed April 16, 1998, which is a Continuation application of application Serial No. 08/882,731, filed June 26, 1997, which is a Divisional application of application Serial No. 08/593,870, filed January 30, 1996, which is a Continuing application of application Serial No. 08/443,039, filed May 17, 1995, which is a Divisional application of application Serial No.

08/302,443, filed September 9, 1994, which is a Continuing application of application Serial No. 08/096,256, filed July 26, 1993, which is a Continuing application of application Serial No. 07/751,952, filed August 29, 1991.--.

REMARKS

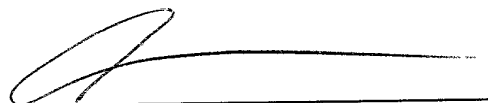
Applicants have amended their specification in order to refer to prior applications of the present application, pursuant to the requirements of 35 USC 120. Clearly, this amendment to the specification does not add new matter to the application.

Entry of the present amendment, and examination of the above-identified application on the merits in due course, are respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR § 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case No. 503.30414V22) and please credit any excess fees to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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